Aristasia Treasure Trove

Jenilow, the Castle and the Hover-Train Wednesday, May 28 2008

Aristasian Geography and Aristasian Historyaristasia11:58 pm

Jenilow is the major Arcadian city in the southern "panhandle" of that country. The city proper has a population of 821,350 (3326 est.) and boasts the historic Abileschen castle downtown. The city is laid out as though its streets form a giant wheel, with the castle at its centre. Jenilow is known for its festive procession in Maia, as well as for its textile and ceramic industries.

Jenilovian culture is distinct both from that of Upper Arcadia and from that of the surrounding nations. It has a curious technics – advanced almost to Novarian standards and yet highly Arcadian in style. It is also more Estrenne in feeling than most of Novaria (which is itself quite "Estrenne", especially in the East of the country).

Those familiar with Jenilow say that certain pictures of Meiji era Japan are the closest Tellurian images to convey the cultural atmosphere of Jenilow. Obviously the comparison is only indicative and does not go beyond the visual impression, but it is still useful.

The current Mayor of Jenilow is Lady Maylana Rosemont. The Mayor, of course, administers the City of Jenilow and the Countess the County of Jenilow, of which the City is the County Town. Jenilow City is also the capital of the Archduchy of Jenilow, a huge "nation within a nation" that occupies most of the so-called "Jenilow peninsula" (it is not a true peninsula, of course, because it is surrounded not by water but by two non-Arcadian nations).

Jenilow Castle was originally the primary seat of the Archduchess of Jenilow – which it still is: it has long also been a triple seat of government, for it houses the council-chamber of the Countess of Jenilow and the chambers of the Mayor of Jenilow. All three dignitaries have extensive living quarters in the great building.

Castles were first built in early Imperial times. They were essentially fortified palaces, usually surrounded by large fortified enclosures. In those days the Outlander hordes still occasionally made incursions into the Eastern and Northern lands. One must also remember that certain classes of demon took on a far more physical form than has usually been the case in Telluria (the Great Demon in the Paper Peonies story is typical of this – and there were also demon armies).

The castle and its walled enclosure was a place where the puhrani (citizens) could retreat and be safe when danger threatened. Some cities were also walled for the same reason.

In later times and further west, the castle style of architecture, with turrets and other fortification-style features (in a more western style) was often adopted, for it had become a symbol of the Great Central Enclosure. On certain occasions the fortification could still provide a refuge against dark incursions, though its function was now largely symbolic.

Jenilow is 42 minutes by rail from Ladyton. The direct land-journey from Jenilow to Ladyton takes place almost entirely on Novarian soil and is not far short of a thousand miles (some suggest it may be more like 500 miles – distances are notoriously difficult to calculate between worlds). Clearly such a distance by train in such a time would be impossible anywhere in Arcadia (even including the Jenilow "peninsula" which is more technically advanced than the rest of that realm). However, the journey connects with the Royal Novarian Golden Arrow Line "super-bullet-express" which connects Southern Novaria with Ladyton and Novarayapurh.

These "super-bullet trains" are the only supersonic land-craft currently used in the Empire. Such speeds are considered unsafe for other land vehicles. The super-bullets are regarded as land-craft, although they are actually hover-trains and do not touch the ground while in operation. The "rails" are in fact force-guides rather than physical rails. At the speed they travel, the friction involved in wheeled locomotion would be unmanageable.

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Sai Rayanna's Day Friday, May 16 2008

Aristasian Historyaristasia8:05 pm

Today is dedicated to Sai Rayanna, also known as the Sun-Daughter.

Before our Era the greatest civilisation in Sai Herthe was that of the great Southern Continent, which was submerged at the end of the Age of Bronze. In the early part of the Age of Iron there was some continuation of that civilisation.

Attacks upon the world of maids by demonic forces increased during this period and the greatest force of defence against them was the Chenti, a civilisation-in-arms dedicated to Sai Vikhë and tracing its lineage back to the Old World.

However, in the Battle of Noonday Night, the Chenti were defeated by the demon-barbarians, and their great Princess Caran was slain, along with most of her people. Her sword, given to her ancestors by Sai Vikhe herself, was broken — a sign of the final destruction of the Chenti.

Caran, with her dying breath, charged that the pieces of the sword should be preserved and given to the One who was worthy to re-forge and wield them.

After many adventures, the shattered sword came to the city of Caire and its Princess Rayanna, the young earth-born daughter of Sai Raya, who re-forged the sword and took it into battle to defeat the demonic hordes and their terrible ruler.

By this act she won the allegiance of all the Rayins of the world, and her city of Caire, far in the East, became the capital of the new civilisation.

All subsequent Empires are the continuation of this one, including the present Westrenne Empire, and all Aristasian Empresses are descended from Sai Rayanna, the incarnate Sun.

See Also:
The Imperial Anthem, which tells the story of Sai Rayanna
The Warrior Queen, which compares Sai Rayanna to Durga

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